

EXHIBIT C
DECLARATION OF LEROY BRINKLEY, JR.

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My name is Leroy Brinkley, Jr. I am over the age of 18 and fully competent to make this declaration.

1. I am an African-American rancher who is a member of the Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project.

2. I want the Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project and Rural Coalition to represent my interests in this lawsuit, *Faust v. Vilsack*, No. 1:21-cv-548 (E.D. Wis.).

3. I live in Haskell, Oklahoma.

4. I own and operate a ranch of 80 acres, where I raise livestock. I have operated this ranch for 23 years and worked as a rancher for 28 years.

5. I currently have farm operating loans from FSA. I have a bank loan from a Farm Credit System lender which is guaranteed by the FSA through the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. I applied for the loans around fall 2020, but due to delays, the application was processed around March 2021. I took out USDA loans in the amount of approximately \$60,000. I planned to use the loans to expand my cattle herd and to establish a construction shop for farming equipment.

6. As of June 21, 2021, the outstanding balance on my loan was approximately \$63,000.

7. I believe I have experienced racial discrimination from USDA and its representatives. For example, I could not participate directly in USDA loan programs because I am a Tribal member. Instead, I had to apply for loans through the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. USDA representatives were unresponsive when I applied for USDA loans. I had a similar experience when I applied for loans in 1991. I did not receive any assistance and my loan

application was rejected. I have discussed these experiences of discrimination with other farmers and Tribal members in my area, and they have shared similar experiences.

8. My family and business have suffered because of the COVID-19 pandemic. My wife contracted COVID-19 and was in the hospital for 9 days. I also contracted COVID-19, along with our 2-week-old granddaughter. Our family had to quarantine apart from each other for 21 days. As a result of the pandemic, I could not go to work for two months and I had to work part-time for approximately 1 year. The pandemic also caused hardship for my ranch operation because I had higher costs for feed, fuel, and production and we lost customers due to COVID-19.

9. I have used my USDA loan in part to cover losses I suffered because of the pandemic, including extra hay and feed at higher prices due to the pandemic, equipment repair, and insurance.

10. I believe I am eligible for loan forgiveness under Section 1005 of the American Rescue Plan Act because I am a socially disadvantaged farmer who has an outstanding loan balance on a loan with USDA.

11. My family and my farm are still recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, and it will be much harder to recover if the USDA's debt repayment is delayed.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Date: June 22, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Leroy Brinkley, Jr.
Leroy Brinkley, Jr.